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Fwd: KRG President Masoud Barzani: Iraq will fall apart if constitution violated

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From: **Dasko Shirwani** <Dasko.Shirwani@krg.org>
Date: Fri, Aug 8, 2008 at 5:13 PM
Subject: KRG President Masoud Barzani: Iraq will fall apart if constitution violated
To: halgord <halgordg@yahoo.com>

President Barzani: Iraq will fall apart if constitution violated

August 7, 2008

Erbil, Kurdistan – Iraq (KRG.org) - Kurdistan Region President Masoud Barzani yesterday in Erbil said that Iraq is in danger of falling apart if the constitution is violated.

He said, "We will not allow the Kurdish people's achievements to be wrecked by the Iraqi parliament. Iraq will fall apart if the Iraqi constitution is violated."

He was referring to a secret ballot on Kirkuk in the Iraqi parliament on 22nd July that violated the parliament's procedures and the Iraqi constitution, and angered many MPs who boycotted the vote and walked out in protest. The violation has stalled the provincial elections law.

At a press conference in Erbil following 10 days of meetings in Baghdad, President Barzani said, "The vote was a chauvinistic act, it was an attempt to kill Article 140 [of the constitution] and remove Kirkuk provincial council's authority. We accepted postponing the elections in Kirkuk, but we will never accept the removal of the council's rightful authority."

The section on Kirkuk in the Iraqi Provincial Elections bill called for seats in Kirkuk's provincial council to be divided equally among Kirkuk's ethnic groups, rather than allowing voters' ballots to decide the number of representatives for each group. This would have violated Article 140 of Iraq's constitution which already sets out how Kirkuk's future status will be decided. President Barzani said that he is in favour of holding provincial elections in Iraq as long as they are carried out according to and within the framework of the constitution. He said, ""The distribution [of seats in Kirkuk] should be decided by election results."

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Tens of thousands of people in the Kurdistan Region demonstrated against the secret ballot. For many Kurds the democratically approved Iraqi constitution enshrines the new federal democratic state and a just and equal relationship between all of its peoples. They fear that actions violating the constitution may relegate Kurds once again to second-class status in Iraq.

The President added that despite the disagreement, the Kurds will continue to support the Iraqi government coalition and play a positive part in the new Iraq. He said, "Kurds do not have any plan to dismantle the Iraqi government because we have played a significant role in forming that government."

This article can also be found at: www.krg.org

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